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## HOUSE RESOLUTION

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REQUESTING THE UNIVERSITY OF HAWAII BOARD OF REGENTS TO INITIATE  
A PUBLIC DISCUSSION ABOUT THE FINANCING AND COST OF PUBLIC  
HIGHER EDUCATION IN HAWAII.

1 WHEREAS, trillion-dollar student loan debt and skyrocketing  
2 tuitions have placed college and university spending in the  
3 national spotlight; and  
4

5 WHEREAS, over the past thirty-five years, inflation-  
6 adjusted tuition costs at public universities have tripled while  
7 per-student investment by states in institutions of public  
8 higher education has dramatically declined; and  
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10 WHEREAS, questions are often also asked about an increasing  
11 national reliance on part-time instructors; and  
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13 WHEREAS, the number of tenure-track university faculty  
14 positions has declined significantly nationwide over the last  
15 two decades; and  
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17 WHEREAS, in considering its personnel needs, the University  
18 of Hawaii should ensure that categories and proportions are  
19 aligned to serve the university's core missions of teaching,  
20 research, and service; and  
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22 WHEREAS, for more than a decade, many colleges and  
23 universities have tried to manage costs created by the growth in  
24 administrative positions and their associated benefits by  
25 increasingly relying on part-time instructors; and  
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27 WHEREAS, by hiring additional professional staff, many  
28 colleges and universities have eliminated much of the savings  
29 that was anticipated from the use of part-time instructors; and  
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1 WHEREAS, an amendment to the Hawaii State Constitution in  
2 2000 provided the University of Hawaii with more autonomy; and  
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4 WHEREAS, the language of that constitutional amendment was  
5 internally inconsistent since it provided the University's Board  
6 of Regents with "exclusive jurisdiction" over the University's  
7 internal operations, which the board already possessed, but also  
8 included qualifying language providing that the Regents'  
9 jurisdiction did not limit the Legislature's power "to enact  
10 laws of statewide concern"; and  
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12 WHEREAS, since the University of Hawaii is the only public  
13 institution of higher learning in the State, proper oversight,  
14 transparency, accountability, and public confidence in its  
15 fiscal and operational administration and academic affairs is  
16 vital; and  
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18 WHEREAS, the University of Hawaii cannot be autonomous from  
19 the State of Hawaii and, conversely, the Legislature cannot  
20 control or micromanage the University for political reasons; and  
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22 WHEREAS, the University has undergone multiple  
23 reorganizations at its flagship Manoa campus and system-wide  
24 since 2001; and  
25

26 WHEREAS, the University acknowledges that it is spending  
27 more in certain areas but that the public does not perceive that  
28 services have noticeably improved; and  
29

30 WHEREAS, the Board of Regents directed the University  
31 administration to convene a public forum regarding the cost of  
32 public higher education in 2013; and  
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34 WHEREAS, the University is convening several internal  
35 working groups to identify functions, challenges, and  
36 opportunities in their areas of responsibility and to evaluate  
37 organizational and operational structures and provide  
38 recommendations on improving efficiency, effectiveness,  
39 accountability and transparency; and  
40



1 WHEREAS, the University has established a framework for  
2 metrics regarding productivity and efficiency; and  
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4 WHEREAS, questions are often raised regarding the most  
5 reasonable balance in higher education between faculty, support  
6 staff, and executive and managerial personnel; and  
7

8 WHEREAS, in considering the optimum relative proportions of  
9 these personnel categories, the University must also balance  
10 productivity and efficiency, academic excellence, and the right  
11 of contingent faculty to earn a living wage; and  
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13 WHEREAS, questions remain about the value of higher  
14 education to students, how much it should cost, what the  
15 appropriate means of containing and reducing costs are, and who  
16 should pay; now, therefore,  
17

18 BE IT RESOLVED by the House of Representatives of the  
19 Twenty-eighth Legislature of the State of Hawaii, Regular  
20 Session of 2015, that the University of Hawaii Board of Regents  
21 is requested to initiate a public discussion about the  
22 University that includes deliberation on the:  
23

- 24 (1) Expectations being placed on the University by the  
25 citizens of the State;  
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- 27 (2) Programmatic demands placed upon the University by the  
28 Legislature;  
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- 30 (3) Approaches that can be taken to reasonably contain and  
31 reduce costs, including reorganizations; and  
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- 33 (4) Optimal sources and proportions of revenue that the  
34 University should target in its budget planning; and  
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36 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the Board of Regents is  
37 requested to submit a report of its findings and  
38 recommendations, including any proposed legislation, to the  
39 Legislature no later than twenty days prior to the convening of  
40 the Regular Session of 2016; and  
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1 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that certified copies of this  
2 Resolution be transmitted to the Chairperson of the Board of  
3 Regents and the Chancellor of each campus of the University of  
4 Hawaii system.  
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OFFERED BY: \_\_\_\_\_

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to be 'AM', is written over a horizontal line.

MAR 13 2015

